Taliban was prevented by the forces the Northern Alliance.

(b) Government of India continue to recognise the Government of Prof. Burhanuddin Rabbani as the legitimate government of Afghanistan.

(c) Government continue to closely follow development in Afghanistan as these have a bearing on India's security and on the peace and stability of the region, and will take all necessary steps to safeguard India's interests.

Agreement on Transit rights among India, Nepal and Bangladesh

172. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India, Nepal and Bangladesh are working towards an agreement on transit rights by air, land and waterways; and

(b) if so, by when this would become a reality?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Foreign Secretaries level Talks Between India and Pakistan

173. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY:
SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE:
SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN:
SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indo-Pakistan Foreign Secretaries level talks were held in the third week of June, 1997 at Islamabad;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof;

(c) the details of the discussions held and the areas of agreement and disagreement;

(d) whether the question of Sir Creek was taken up in the meeting; and

(e) if so, the decision arrived at on this issue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA): (a) to (c) The second round of the resumed Foreign Secretary level talks between India and Pakistan was held in Islamabad from 19—23 June, 1997. A Joint statement was issued on 23 June, 1997 in Islamabad on the conclusion of the talks.

The two sides decided to address, *inter alia,* the following subjects: (a) peace and security, including CBMs; (b) Jammu and Kashmir; (c) Siachen; (d) Tulbul Navigation Project; (e) Sir Creek; (f) Terrorism and drug trafficking; (g) Economic and Commercial Cooperation; (h) Promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields. They also agreed to set up a mechanism, including working groups at appropriate levels, to addess all these issues in an integrated manner; the issues at (a) and (b) above will be dealt at the level of the Foreign secretaries, who will also coordinate and monitor the progress of all the working groups. Both sides further agreed to take all possible steps to prevent hostile propaganda and provocative actions against each other.

(d) and (e) The discussions focussed primarily on establishing modalities and mechanism for future talks. Sir Creek has been identified as one of the issues for future discussions.

MEA's Role to Promote Investment and Trade Flows

174. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of External Affairs plays active role in wooing foreign funds for core-sectors;

(b) if so, the action taken by it in this regard during the last one year; and

(c) the other steps taken to promote investment and trade flows?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERWANI): (a) Yes, Sir. Ministry of External Affairs has been involved in promoting foreign investments into India particularly through our Missions abroad. It recognizes that huge investments are required in infrastructure and core sectors and as such along with the other relevant Ministries Places focus on encouraging investments in these sectors.

(b) Wooing and encouraging foreign investors to invest India is an ongoing effort, the quantification of which over a sengmented period may not be feasible. The Ministry's efforts involve publicity, seminars, shows, discussions with business leaders abroad and providing guidance and information to foreign investors at various stages. It also facilitates contacts with apex Chambers and joint venture partners. Our Missions play a major role in this.

(c) Steps to promote investment and trade are in the nature of dissemination of information on India's economic policies and the liberalized economic environment conducive for foreign investments and trade. The steps include distribution of publicity literature, guidance and support to visiting delegations to and from India, facilitating business contracts and providing trade and investment related information and assisting the efforts of our state Governments through our Missions abroad. The Ministry also assists the efforts of the Chambers of Commerce and gives a diplomatic support to the work of other concerned Ministries.

Pakistani Gesture on Easing of Visa Rules by India

175. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistani has taken any reciprocal steps to India's gesture easing visa rules for Pakistani visitors to India;

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA): (a) and (b) While Pakistan has in bilateral discussions indicated that it favours easing its visa regime for Indian nationals, Government are not aware of any steps taken by Pakistan in this regard.

Denial of Chinese Visa to Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister

176. SHRI S. MATHU MANI:
SHRI O.P. KOHLI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi denied visa to the Chief Minister of Arunchal Pradesh stating that persons from Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim can go to China without a visa and that China does not recognise the passports issued by the Government of India to the people in Arunchal Pradesh and Sikkim as that country considers these two Indian States to be part of China and refuses to recognize Indian sovereignty over these two Indian States; and

(b) whether Government took a note on the above, as reported in the press on the 29th June, 1997; if so, whether Government lodged complaint with the Chinese authorities in New Delhi. If so, what was the reaction of the Chinese authorities in Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Curbing Anti-India Activities from Nepali Soil

177. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state: